

The airwaves are granted by the FCC, which is supposed to hear public views. Does the FCC really believe that the new radio merges have increased public service and local news coverage? In Seattle, we have just 2 radio news departments KIRO-AM, KOMO-AM). Before the 1996 Act by the FCC to allow 8 stations to be owned in the same market, Seattle had as many as 10 radio news departments. I know this from experience. I was news and program director for KIRO-AM from 1976-79. There were "real" news staffs at KVI (no more, one man is a rip and reader) KJR (one man, rip and read) KBRD (gone, now KMTT, all music) KSEA (gone now KQBZ, all talk, no local news whatsoever) Other call letters that had news departments (meaning more than one airperson who "ripped and read") KAYO, KTW, KOI and KXA Radio. All of the aforementioned call letters have since been changed and replaced with stations that do no local news reporting and very little Public Service!

Allowing the mergers to continue with newspapers and TV stations under the same ownership in the same market will certainly expand this horrid march toward less public service.

You have killed independent thought on radio. Now you want to continue the homogenization of the media.

Please stop!

Sincerely,

Bill Wippel, 50 years in media, 40 in radio.